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ALASKA SALMON PACK SHOWS INCREASE

In an address delivered to the American Fisheries Society convening in Seattle, Director John L. Farley of the Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, yesterday revealed that this year's Alaska salmon pack, as of August 21, totaled 2,845,307 cases as compared with 2,603,101 cases on the same date last year.

While a small additional pack will be forthcoming from the limited fall fishing seasons, the Director said, this figure represents, for all practical purposes, the pack for 1954.

Despite the increase over last year's pack, 1954 falls far below normal and is 728,693 cases short of the 1952 pack of 3,574,000 cases. The comparatively meager pack was expected, however, due to a vigorous Fish and Wildlife Service program aimed at preserving Alaska salmon runs in certain areas for brood stock to rehabilitate the fishery. This conservation program was necessitated by overexploitation of the fishery. The program has the backing of the fishermen and cannerymen, as well as that of the Department of the Interior.

The 1954 pack in southeastern Alaska came to 1,124,715 cases, as compared with a pack of 977,682 cases last year. The central Alaska pack was 1,330,620 cases, as against 1,350,589 cases in 1953. In western Alaska the pack was 389,972 cases, as compared to 533,996 cases last year.

Bristol Bay had good runs of red salmon this year in two districts, and poor to fair runs in the other two, as anticipated. In the latter case, a greater proportion of the runs was permitted to escape. This should result in larger returns in the next cycle.

In central Alaska, runs were about normal with good packs and escapements of pinks and chums at Kodiak. Red salmon runs, however, were only fair, with poor runs at Chignik reported. The Copper River red salmon pack, though, was the largest on record.

The complete closure of Prince William Sound resulted in near optimum escapements of pink salmon. If survival is good, this fishery should be normal in 1956.

Restrictions in southeastern Alaska, whereby large bays were closed to seining, and trap potential was cut by 50 percent, resulted in generally good early escapements of pinks. The later pink runs, however, were small and 4 to 7 days additional closure had to be applied. This is expected to result in considerably better escapements than in the parent year of 1952.

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